

**EXHIBIT O**

**10/18/02 Western News article, “Risks Worry Plum Creek and USFS”**



# The Western

Devoted to the development of Libby and Lincoln County

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## BRIEFS

### Sara Grey sings at Little Theatre

Folk singer Sara Grey will perform in Libby on Saturday, Oct. 19, at 7 p.m. in the Little Theatre.

The concert is presented by the Libby Irish Fair committee.

Backing up Grey on guitar will be Nan Bovington from Missoula.

Tickets are available at Cabinet Books.

### Flu shots clinic set at Rosauers store

St. John's Lutheran Hospital Community Outreach will provide flu shots at Rosauers on Oct. 19, 24 and 30.

The flu shot clinic at the Libby grocery store will be Saturday, Oct. 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Thursday, Oct. 24, from 3-6 p.m. and Wednesday, Oct. 30, from 3-6 p.m.

Cost is \$15, cash only. No billing will be filed to insurance or Medicare.

For more information call Susan Horelick at 293-0180.

### Mark White presents fur-trading program

Forest Service archeologist Mark White will present a program on early fur trading when the Libby Pioneer Society meets Sunday, Oct. 20, at 1 p.m. at the Libby Senior Citizens Center.

The meeting will start with a potluck luncheon followed by a business meeting. The public is encouraged to attend but bring a dish.

### Doctor, nurse speak at breast cancer dessert

Dr. Lance Ercanbrack and Linda Matthews, RN, will be guest speakers at the annual Breast Cancer Awareness Dessert on Thursday, Oct. 24, at 7 p.m. at the Libby Elks Club.

The dessert is sponsored by St. John's Lutheran Hospital and the American Cancer Society.

Tickets are \$5 each.

### LMS band, choir to perform Oct. 21-22

Libby Middle School bands and choir will have concerts on Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 21-22, in the school gym.

The LMS band concert will be Monday at 7 p.m. under the direction of John Nelson.

The LMS choir will perform their fall concert on Tuesday at 7 p.m. under the direction of the Brenda Nagode and Linda Kappus.

### Commodity foods distributed Oct. 26

Commodity food distribution will be Saturday, Oct. 26, at the VFW Community Hall from 12 noon to 3 p.m.

Registered senior citizens 60

## Declaration needed say victims

By ROGER MORRIS  
Western News Publisher

**“The state budget shortfall of \$230 million isn't anything compared to what we will see with this.”**

Rita Windom  
County commissioner

An effort may be started to lobby Montana's congressional delegation to get Libby declared a public health emergency at the federal level.

The hope is federal funding for a community medical trust for asbestos victims would follow such a declaration.

Libby asbestos victims questioned Environmental Protection Agency officials Wednesday night on why the community was not declared a health emergency earlier this year.

The EPA had called the Wednesday special meeting following considerable discussion at the Thursday night

Community Advisory Group on the health emergency, the \$2.75 million settlement between the EPA and W.R. Grace and logging in the Rainy Creek drainage.

Concerns about the first two issues are being driven by the need for a community health trust for asbestos victims. The logging proposal has people concerned about additional contamination by asbestos-laden vermiculite.

Paul Peronard, on-site coordinator for the EPA, said he recommended that Libby be declared a public health emergency along with his request to clean Zonolite insulation from homes and commercial buildings.

Marianne Horinko, head of the

Superfund program for the EPA, made the decision that the insulation could be removed without a public health emergency declaration. Peronard said.

“Ms Horinko got input from all sorts of people and signed the order,” he said. “What she was most concerned about was that we move forward on insulation removal.”

Some of that input came from an unusual source, the Office of Management and Budget, which Peronard said he has never seen before on the Superfund sites he has worked.

Les Skramstad said he thought the

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## NYC Visitors



Libby onsite coordinator Paul Peronard introduces New York City EPA officials to Brad Black, director for the Center for Asbestos Related Disease.

## Rainy Creek logging

## Risks worry Plum Creek and USFS

By BRENT SHRUM  
Western News Reporter

Crews contracted by the Environmental Protection Agency are scheduled to start paving Rainy Creek Road next week, but agency officials remain unsure of the health risks associated with planned logging operations in the area.

The U.S. Forest Service, the state and Plum Creek are all planning timber sales in the Rainy Creek area

**USFS moves forward with task force timber proposal**  
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near W.R. Grace's former vermiculite mine. Recent health screenings have revealed asbestos-related disease among loggers who worked in the area when the mine was in operation, but questions remain about the risks posed 12 years after the mine closed.

“If you're looking for a clean bill of health, for EPA to come in and say it's OK for people to be working here and chopping up trees and spending a lot of time, even if I find the money, I can't answer that in the short term,” local Superfund project manager Jim Christiansen, said during a meeting held Wednesday by the Lincoln County Commissioners.

While the proposed timber sales are within a couple of miles of the mine site, they are upwind and geologically separate from the asbestos-contaminated vermiculite deposits that were mined from the 1920s until 1990. Grace records indicate that tons of asbestos were lost during mining operations, but EPA on-scene coordinator Paul Peronard said he suspects the “fallout” would probably have

## WTC cleanup looks to Libby

NYC EPA officials study methodology on health, safety, cleanup

By ROGER MORRIS  
Western News Publisher

Environmental Protection Agency officials responsible for apartment and building cleanup surrounding New York City's “ground zero” site toured Libby Tuesday afternoon.

Two onsite coordinators, a toxicologist and the EPA's deputy regional administrator for the New York area came to Libby to see the extent of the asbestos problem here and how cleanup was being done.

When the World Trade Center towers collapsed following terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, clouds of dust spread out across the lower sections of Manhattan. Asbestos, both chrysotile and tremolite, have been found in dust samples but are farther down the list of concern behind high levels of fiberglass fibers, said Paul Peronard, the EPA's on-site coordinator

in Libby.

“There's a lot less information on what that means,” Peronard said. And it's difficult telling the difference between fiberglass and asbestos fibers, he said.

Also, asbestos amphibole from Libby has been found in the dust.

The steel structural beams in the World Trade Centers were believed to be covered with Monokote, a W.R. Grace product sprayed on the steel structure as fire proofing.

According to a July 2001 New York Times article, from 1970 until the late 1980's, Grace deceptively advertised the spray as “asbestos-free” even though it contained trace amounts of tremolite asbestos. The pre-1970's Monokote was

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Combined Campaign

Splendid fall

# USFS moving forward on task force plan for fuel reduction

Looking to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires while generating economic benefits, Forest Service officials are planning more high-priority hazardous fuels reduction work in the Kootenai National Forest.

The fuels reduction project is a direct response to input from a community task force called together to help identify potential answers to concerns about stability of log supply at the Stimson Mill and associated jobs in Lincoln County. The task force has also been working closely with the Montana congressional delegation in support of this issue.

Stimson's 10-year log supply

contract with Plum Creek Timber Company terminates at the end of 2003. Company officials in Portland have said that the mill could survive if the Forest Service can identify about 20 million board feet of timber more than presently cut on the KNF.

Castaneda said he has committed the Forest Service to do all it can to help sustain the local economy.

"This forest has been supporting the communities in Lincoln County for nearly 100 years and we are resolved to continue doing all we can to help overcome this current challenge," he said. "Fuels reduction work in the wildland-

urban interface is a top priority under the National Fire Plan and the Western Governors Association's 10-year comprehensive strategy. The Kootenai National Forest and the community task force saw potential that continued work in the urban interface could create additional opportunities for the local economy, above and beyond our regular timber sale program."

The overall goal is to lessen the long-term potential for wildfires that could threaten lives and property, Castaneda said. This threat became real to several communities in Lincoln County in 1994 and throughout Montana in 2000. This past summer, many more communities in Arizona, Colorado, California, and Oregon suffered serious damage from the unnatural fuel buildup in and near

their neighborhoods.

The hazardous fuels reduction project in the KNF could generate timber as a by-product. The additional timber would be available through competitive bidding by local mills, including the Stimson plywood plant in Libby.

The Forest Service will use commercial timber sales and stewardship contracts to remove excess trees that have value as lumber products.

"This has two benefits," Castaneda said. "One, it is a common-sense way to reduce the burden to taxpayers to pay for high priority fuel reduction work on federal lands, and two, it provides wood products for U.S. consumers."

Commercial-sized trees that may need to be removed are estimated to total up to 5-10 million board feet

The USFS Northern Region administration fully supports the project and has granted pilot stewardship authority for it, which provides more options and flexibility to use contracts to complete the work, according to Castaneda. This would be the third stewardship project the Kootenai has been granted. The first two are the Yaak and Treasure Interface stewardship projects.

The Forest Service administration in the Washington, D.C., office has also approved the project as one of six pilot cases nationwide to improve efficiency of the environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act.

"The Forest Service, from the national level down to the local forest and districts, is committed to helping Lincoln County," Castaneda said.

The first phase of the Kootenai project will be to identify urban interface areas that need treatment. Mechanical thinning, prescribed burning, or a combination of treatment methods may be considered, including removing brush and sub-merchantable and merchantable timber. The Forest will use a diverse cross-section of local citizens and organizations to participate and help develop project details.

The area to be studied on the Kootenai National Forest encompasses about 160,500 acres around the communities of Eureka, Exford, Fortine, Trego, West Kootenai, and Libby. Other portions of the forest are being addressed in current planning or were already treated in fuels reduction projects over the past few years.

## Signup begins for McGrade bazaar

McGrade School Community Council is seeking crafters for their annual bazaar on Nov. 23.

Cost of a table for crafters and vendors is \$10. The bazaar

will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tables must be reserved before Nov. 20.

For more information or to make a reservation call 293-8791.

## Rainy Creek

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washed down into the Kootenai River by now.

"I think that," he said. "I certainly don't know that."

No one knows if asbestos sticks to trees, or even how to test for it, Peronard said.

"It's just a problem that we put off in terms of priority," he said.

Residential cleanups have been given a higher priority than work near the mine site, where no one lives, Christiansen said. Nothing has been budgeted for the current or upcoming fiscal year for work in the Rainy Creek area, he said.

"I'm not even sure I'll get everything I want for the residential stuff," he said.

Peronard said he recognizes the need to harvest timber in the area for fire suppression if nothing else.

"Somebody's going to have to log up there at some point in time," he said.

Christiansen said he can provide information to allow the Forest Service, Plum Creek and the state to make their own decisions on whether or not to move ahead with the timber sales. He offered to provide cost estimates on a range of options ranging "from bare bones to Cadillac." Bare bones

could include a recommendation based on geology, prevailing winds and basic soil sampling. The "Cadillac" version would be more extensive and could include having people in protective gear simulate logging activities while collecting air samples.

"There's uncertainties with every approach we come up with," he said.

If the EPA has to find funding for the work, nothing will happen before next spring at the earliest, Christiansen said.

The Forest Service's 1.5 million board foot timber sale was part of a past year's target that was not met and has been postponed indefinitely, said Tom Maffei of the Kootenai National Forest supervisor's office. Beetle-killed trees planned for harvest have already been written off, he said, but the remainder of the sale is green timber.

"At this point it's not even on the front burner," Maffei said. "It's on the back burner. We don't have anything to replace it. We're not going to replace it. We're just going to

continue on with our program."

Plum Creek forester Dave Friedman said his company's beetle-killed timber in the Rainy Creek drainage is deteriorating rapidly and losing its value. Plum Creek wouldn't be doing anything in the area before next spring, but next fall may be nearing the end of the window of opportunity, he said.

Regardless, Plum Creek won't log the area if doing so endangers the health of loggers or mill workers, Friedman said.

"None of us want to put anybody at risk," he said. "That's the bottom line."

Forest Service district ranger Malcolm Edwards said his agency would like to sell the timber at Rainy Creek, but not if there is an unreasonable risk to the public. He said he would like to see the EPA concur that there isn't an unreasonable risk before the sale proceeds.

"Not a guarantee but a concurrence," he said. "It that's not reasonable to procure, I'm not prepared to recommend that we sell it."

## OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA

### SLEEP SYMPTOMS

- Snoring
- Apneas
- Frequent trips to the bathroom
- Gasping
- Choking
- Restless Sleep
- Morning Headaches

### AWAKE SYMPTOMS

- Tiredness
- Concentration problems
- Moodiness
- Depression
- Impotence
- Weight problems
- Short term memory loss

Sleep Apnea is a common and easily treatable condition. Untreated it can lead to hypertension, heart disease, strokes and premature death. If you think you may have Sleep Apnea contact your health care provider to see if a sleep evaluation may be right for you.



**THE SLEEP DISORDERS CENTER**

PHONE (406) 752-1729

"Better Health Through Better Sleep"

## Thank You

We would like to express a special thank you to everyone who helped us get through the loss of our mother. Thanks for all the cards, flowers, food and most of all, thanks for the prayers.

*From the family of Jan Thom*

